DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 316 507 SP 031 906

AUTHOR Lang, H. R.; Hromyk, W.
TITLE Professional Development: Preservice to Inservice.
PUB DATE 89
NOTE 24p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Western Canadian Association for Student Teaching (Calgary, Alberta, Canada, 1989).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Classroom Techniques; Elementary Secondary Education; Helping Relationship; Inservice Teacher Education; *Microteaching; Preservice Teacher Education; *Professional Development; Student Journals; Teacher Effectiveness; *Teaching Methods; *Theory Practice Relationship

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the need for continuous personal professional development, the University of Regina (Canada) approach to professional development, planning for improvement, and sources of feedback on professional improvement attempts. The process involves three components. The first is a supervisory or conferencing procedure that has student pairs (or teams) conference prior to a lesson about the target (competency or method) to be attempted, collection of data about a professional target during the lesson, and debriefing after the lesson about pupil learnings and the student teacher's growth with respect to the professional target. The second component uses a helping (facilitating and supportive but nonjudgmental) frame of reference during the conferencing. Finally, the actual practice of specific targets, using a cycle of theory presentation and modeling, reflection, practice through microteaching, reflection, and practice in a school classroom, and reflection. To facilitate reflection, participants write frequent entries in professional journals, recording personal professional growth. The appendix presents suggested steps for practicing the target in the microteaching lab, and guidelines for keeping a professional journal. (JD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED316507

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Preservice to Inservice

Presented to

The Western Canadian Association for Student Teaching
Annual Conference

Calgary

by

H. R. Lang

and

W. Hromyk

Faculty of Education
University of Regina

1989

SP031906

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

H. R. Lang

W. Hromyk

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Need for Personal Professional Development

Continuous Professional Development

Personal professional development should occur from preservice to retirement service. Student teachers can experience a personalized approach to becoming competent professionals which allows them to add to their personal professional understanding and competence. Teachers have a choice, they can have thirty or more years of professional improvement or one year of experience with little or no improvement thirty times.

This paper discusses the need for continuous personal professional development, the University of Regina approach to professional development, planning for improvement and sources of feedback on professional improvement attempts.

Professional Development and Decision-Making

> To be sure, teaching--like the practice of medicine--is very much like an art, which is to say it calls for the exercise of talent and creativity. But like medicine, it is also--or it should be--a science, for it involves a repertoire of techniques, procedures, and skills that can be systematically studied and described, and therefore transmitted and improved. (Silberman in Woolfolk, 1984, p. 3)

Effective use of the art and science of teaching avoids the extremes of "winging it" and following "recipes." Teaching is an incredibly complex process. Every teacher, pre- or inservice, can improve. While one cannot "make a silk purse out of a sow's ear," one can make a very serviceable "sows ear purse!" To some extent, a good teacher is "born;" however, "teaching is a learned behavior" (Kindsvater, Wilen, & Ishler, 1988, p. xviii). A teacher can learn how to establish a positive climate for learning and how to use a wide repertoire of instructional skills, teaching methods, content and materials and resources. Many of these can be at a teachers fingertips; and, the process of risking, learning and using new materials and approaches should be ongoing.

A teacher's instructional decisions and actions should be based on the scientific basis for the teaching process and its effect on pupil achievement and still exercise personal talent and creativity. Teachers can be informed by the considerable body of research that now exists (O'Neill, 1988; O'Sullivan, 1988; Coonan, 1987; Smith, 1987; Brophy & Good, 1986; Rosenshine & Stevens, 1986; Berliner, 1985; Lasley, 1985; Ornstein, 1985; Clifton & Long, 1984; Gage, 1984; Thompson, 1983; Weber, Roff, Crawford, & Robinson, 1983; Blackburn, Burnham, Scannel, Gant, and Howsam, 1981).

The Impetus for Improvement

General Impetus. "The 1980s have seen a barrage of comment on accountability and the need to improve schooling and teacher education. Most comes from the United States but Canadians have also caught the "American flu." The better known reports include: A Nation at Risk, American National Commission on Excellence in Education; Action for Excellence, National Governors Conference; Teaching in the 21st Century: A Nation Prepared, Carnegie Foundation; and, A Place Called School, John Goodlad.

Hensen (1988) comments that these reports have had positive and negative impacts but all of state that schools need substantial improvement (p. 3). He observes that most reports contain serious

flaws since they are written by special interest groups with narrow perspectives. Many recommendations for improving the quality of education, he says, are unfounded and educationally unsound, and a number of known educationally sound ways of improving schooling are not included (pp. 3-5). Recommendations that are sound include: identifying the major concepts in school subjects, teaching communication skills and promoting cooperation in classrooms, and learning how to motivate students (p. 7). Henson points out that research shows that teachers are quite satisfied with their own content knowledge background but "want more knowledge about teaching methods, the psychology of learning, classroom management, and discipline" (p. 7).

Professional Organization or Department of Education Impetus. Professional Associations, provincial or local, often provide materials and/or sponsor workshops, conferences or other professional development opportunities. Inservice sessions and materials are often available through the provincial Department of Education. Effectiveness depends on whether or not sponsoring body goals are accepted, if the potential rewards (extrinsic and intrinsic) are valued by the teachers involved, and if a feeling of personal ownership and accountability is established.

Individual School District or School Impetus. At times school districts or individual schools initiate efforts to improve instruction. Services of provincial associations, Faculties of Education, or private agencies or consultants may be sought. Again, effectiveness is dependent on whether or not personal ownership and accountability occurs and if collegial relationships are established as a team works cooperatively together to achieve professional development goals.

Intrinsic Impetus. Intrinsic and symbolic rewards are often more powerful than extrinsic and material rewards (Mitchell & Peters, p. 74). Teachers care about their students and the well-being of society. Almost every teacher would like to be considered to be a "good" teacher and welcomes "reasonable" opportunity for professional development. Given the demanding nature of teaching, teachers have limited time and opportunity for personal professional development. A major question is how available time can be used most effectively. Another concern is the kind of professional development process to use.

The Professional Development Process and Preservice Teachers

The University of Regina's Professional Development Process

Components. The University of Regina has developed a systematic approach called the "Professional Development Process" which combines:

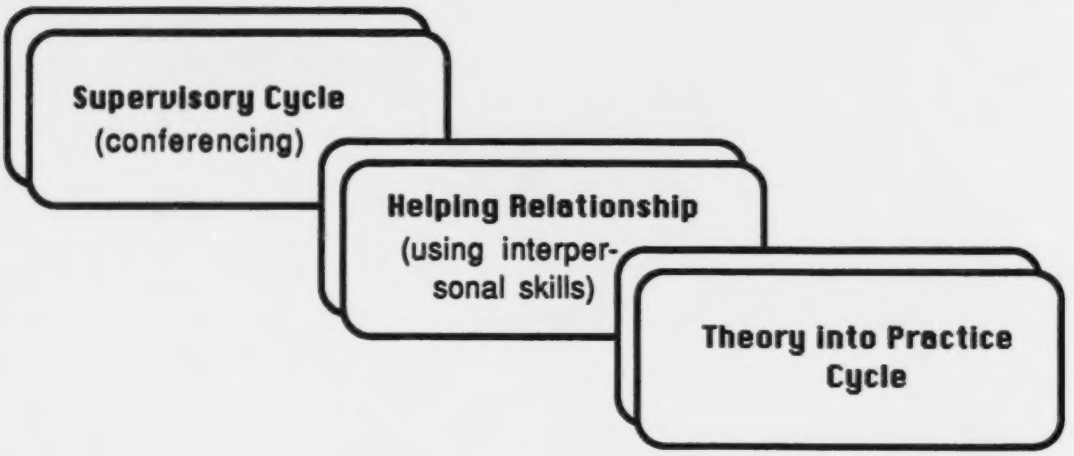
(a) clinical supervision,
(b) the helping relationship, and
(c) a cycle of theory, practice and reflection.

This process (at least aspects of it) can be used during the preservice period and throughout the professional career of the teacher.

The Model. The "professional development process" can be used to help students acquire the behaviors of a competent professional teacher. Stress is on initial capability in the use of generic or fundamental principles and practices of teaching and development of a strong personal professional self-concept. The goal is holistic development which moves from known to "not yet known," simple to complex, and parts to the whole. The process uses three interrelated components as specific targets (skills) are practiced:

1. A *supervisory or conferencing procedure* that has student pairs (or teams) conference prior to a lesson about the target (competency or method) to be attempted, collection of data about a professional target during the lesson, and debriefing after the lesson about pupil learnings and the student teacher's growth with respect to the professional target;
2. The use of a *helping* (facilitating and supportive but nonjudgmental) *frame of reference* during conferencing; and,
3. The practice of specific targets, using a *cycle of theory presentation and modeling, reflection, practice through microteaching, reflection, practice in a school classroom, and reflection.*

The Professional Development Process



The Supervisory Cycle

Supervisory Cycle.

During microteaching laboratories and school experiences students take part in a cycle of:

Preconferencing --> Teaching/Observing --> Postconferencing.
and Data Collection

This could be called "clinical supervision" (which is not quite accurate). Conferences deal with:

(a) achievement of lesson ***objectives*** by pupils, and

(b) achievement of a specific professional ***target*** (competency or method) by the student teacher.

When conferencing, students are expected to use the "helping relationship" and communication and interpersonal skills together with descriptive, nonjudgmental data collection and feedback. Students should be divided into pairs (although teams or three to five could be used) for their laboratory and school placement lessons and alternate as "helper" and "helpee" as they prepare for, deliver, and analyze the lessons they teach. A preconference is held prior to a lesson. The pair

discusses how the student teacher proposes to achieve the objectives of the lesson and a professional target. The lesson is taught by one of the pair while the other observes and collects data on the chosen professional target in the manner determined in the preconference. After the lesson is taught, a postconference is held and the data which has been collected is analyzed by the pair. Then, the one who taught the lesson determines what future action to take with respect to the target.

Principal focus is on a specific target and not everything the student teacher does or says during a lesson. One target at a time--the topic of the current cycle, (for example providing clear directions)--is stressed. A student cannot concentrate on the entire act of teaching at once. To use an analogy, the beginning golfer, when striking the ball, cannot think of all of hundreds of elements of the golf swing including the correct golf grip, stance, body turn and thrust, backswing, stroke and follow-through at the same time with the hope that all will be improved simultaneously. So, too, with the student teacher who cannot be expected to improve, one and at the same time, all of the elements of the complex act of teaching.

In each *preconference,* students preview and, as appropriate, revise their plans regarding the lesson topic, content, objectives, prerequisite learnings, set, development, closure, materials and aids, evaluation, professional target, ways of achieving the target, and how data will be collected.

When the lesson is taught, it will be observed and data will be recorded about the "teacher's" presentation and manner in which the target was used. It is critical that data collection be objective and descriptive, rather than sketchy and judgmental. Statements about how 'good' or 'bad' the lesson was should not be recorded. It will be up to the "teacher" to analyze the data. The data collector merely "mirrors" what occurred.

The *postconference* includes debriefing on lesson elements, review of the target that was agreed upon, nonjudgmental presentation of the data collected, analysis of the data by the "teacher" with the help of the observer, decision by the teacher as to the significance of the data, and a decision by the teacher about future action. The task of the "helper" is to present the data that were collected and be a nonjudgmental facilitator. Ownership of the data, onus for analysis of them, and a decision about future action with respect to the target rests with the "teacher."

The Helping Relationship

The Effective Helper

To be an effective helper, the teacher must know subject matter content, have a good grasp of learning and developmental theory, and have command of a wide repertoire of instructional skills. However, more than this is needed--well-developed communication, interpersonal and group skills and a personality that allows others to achieve personal projects. Members of the class and laboratory groups should be taught and expected to use these skills.

Setting

The instructional setting should foster interaction between students and between students and teacher. It should be characterized by feelings of support and commonness of purpose. Seating arrangements should permit instructor modeling of a variety of teaching methods and promote participation and a feeling of openness and comfort. Presentations can take place in a semi-circle and frequent use should be made of groups.

Climate

Desired climate. The attempt to build a positive, supportive climate for the growth of each student should be a constant concern as students acquire professional competence. Students need to be able to take risks. The instructor should present and model the norms; and, the operational characteristics of classes, labs and school experiences should foster peer support.

Norms. Instructors should identify and exemplify (model) the norms of: empathy (the central norm); warmth (friendliness and considerateness); care, openness (revealing what is felt while being sensitive to feelings); genuineness; positive regard and respect; concreteness and specificity (being descriptive and specific, rather than judgmental or vague); willingness to risk (failures being viewed as "deferred successes" with the recognition that first tries may be "off-track" or "awkward"); and, commitment (the active intent to achieve). Behavior congruent with the norms should be expected during classes, microteaching experiences, and field classroom experiences. Teacher education students should be helpers (or facilitators) who are:

- empathetic,
- warm and caring,
- open and genuine,
- positive and respectful of others,
- providers of specific, descriptive and nonjudgmental feedback,
- capable communicators, and
- introspective but not paranoid.

Communication, interpersonal and group skills. A positive, supportive climate can be set by specifically teaching, and having students practice, communication, interpersonal and group skills. Students should be expected to use these skills. They are a critical part of the repertoire of professional teachers. Communicating effectively (verbally and nonverbally) reduces the possibility of discrepancy between the message intended and the message actually received. Effective interpersonal skills promote clear two-way communication, reduce the "interpersonal gap," and lead to effective groups. Group skills are needed for cohesiveness as students attend to the task of becoming effective teachers (Lang & Scarfe, 1988). The figure below illustrates the desired skills.

Communication, Interpersonal and Group Skills

Communication Skills	Interpersonal Skills	Group Skills
Verbal:	Paraphrasing	Participating
Word choice	Describing others' behavior	Problem solving
Clarity	Perception checking	Goal Setting
Pronunciation	Making clear statements	Resolving conflicts
Tone variation	Describing own behavior	Monitoring group effectiveness
Pausing	Describing feelings	
Nonverbal:		
Gestures		
Eye Contact		
Facial Expression		
Body Position		

Support. In keeping with the norms of the class (or laboratory) group, students should act as support for peer professional growth. They can "pull for" and help each other. Students and

instructors should provide descriptive, specific, nonjudgmental feedback that is offered in a "helping" manner. Effective feedback can be demonstrated and practiced in class discussions and activities, in the microteaching lab, and in "tries" in the school. This allows students to risk and learn from "deferred successes." Students can be challenged to grow and yet not feel threatened and the potentially deleterious effects of competition will be reduced.

Grading. Ideally, students enrolled in courses whose purpose is to have students acquire professional skills should be graded on a pass/fail basis. This should be done because:

(a) the intention is for students to achieve an acceptable level of mastery of the skills, strategies and professional development process that they study--having mastery of 60% of the skills or a 60% mastery of a given skill is not good enough,
(b) it is very difficult to meaningfully grade performance of the competencies studied, and
(c) when the competitive "club" of percentage grades is removed, it is easier to set and maintain a supportive, "helping" climate for growth.

Giving and Receiving Feedback. Feedback can facilitate growth by providing information to another person about what s/he has been doing and/or saying and/or the effect on others. Specific targets (skills or methods) can be practiced and feedback given and received after each try of a target. Reflection must take place and a decision must be made about the next try of the target Each student is responsible for his or her own growth. Improvement can only take place if the student teacher can practice a target, receive accurate feedback, analyze and interpret the feedback, and make a decision about the next practice of the target. The person who provides the feedback (whether this is the student teacher's partner, the lab instructor, or the cooperating teacher) has the responsibility of providing useful data. Feedback should be nonthreatening and nonjudgmental and be received as information intended to help (not as evaluation or judgment). Ownership of information received and plans to act on it rests with the receiver. Effective feedback is: Solicited, descriptive and clear rather than evaluative, focused on behavior which can be controlled, provided at the earliest opportunity, specific and complete rather than general, and with ownership with the receiver not the giver.

Delivery Cycle

Content should be delivered through a sequence of: theory presentation and modeling, reflection, microteaching, reflection, classroom practice, and reflection. A three-week cycle (see the figure below) can be used to cover each topic. A new target cycle begins each week.

Delivery Cycle: Principles and Practices of Teaching

Reflection Modeled Theory ---> skill introduced & modeled (total class) WEEK ONE	Feedback & Reflection Microteaching to Peers --->> controlled practice of skill (groups of 6--3 pairs) WEEK TWO	Feedback & Reflection School Practice --->> classroom practice of skill (pairs) WEEK THREE

Students can be actively rather than passively involved in meaningful personalized learning if a deliberate theory-with-practice cycle is used. An example of how the cycle works may help. One of the topics can be "Giving Directions." First, theory presentation, instructor modeling and debriefing of effective direction-giving takes place. Students then engage in personal professional reflection about their class experiences. Next, in a lab, each student presents a mini-lesson. The

purpose of labs is to practice direction-giving (the professional "target"). Students present their lessons to their microteaching group which consists of from six to ten peers and a lab instructor. Debriefing then takes place. Students, in their journals, record reflections about their lab experiences. Then students (who have been placed in their lab pairs in school classrooms) each teach a lesson to practice giving directions. Finally, students record reflections about school lessons in their professional journals.

The professional journal is used to foster comprehension and internalization of, and capability with, the target (i.e., direction-giving). Students reflect about their classes, labs and school experiences by recording a **description** of what was experienced, the **impact** (learnings and feelings) as a result of the experience, and the resulting **intent** (commitment) for specific future action to achieve their target.

Laboratory Microteaching to Practice the Target

Student teachers will have experienced a presentation about, and modeling of, a specific competency. Ideally, in journals, they will have recorded learnings and feelings and how they intend to attempt the target in their microteaching laboratory.

The lab should provide a "safe," controlled, environment for the practice of a new target. If the first practice were in an actual classroom it would be difficult for student teachers to concentrate on the specific target. They would have to attend to many variables and feel obligated to teach their lessons as well as possible. Teaching is very complex. In the microteaching setting, the overall success of the lesson can be a secondary consideration and students can devote major attention to achieving the target. The overriding purpose of the lesson is to practice and receive feedback on initial tries of a skill. Students can "crawl before they try to walk, walk before they run, and run after they have learned to walk." Being less pressured, student teachers can have optimum benefit from their initial tries before they practice the new skill or method in an actual classroom.

To help provide a "safe" learning opportunity, the topics chosen should not be complicated, require subject matter depth, or be longer than 10 minutes. The purpose of microteaching lessons is to practice targets. Content should not "get in the way" and topic choice should be left to the students. For instance, a student may select a favorite hobby or part of a subject they eventually hope to teach. What is important is that the topics be suitable for the practice of the target at hand. For example, if questioning technique is the target, the content and teaching method must lend itself to using questioning.

While the major purpose of labs is for student teachers to have "safe" initial tries of professional targets, a continuing secondary consideration is for students to become proficient with past targets and with conferencing, observation, data collection, and communication and interpersonal skills.

Procedure. If groups of six are used, a time block of two hours will be required so each student teacher can practice the professional target (20 to 30 additional minutes will be needed if groups of eight are used). A lab instructor acts as a facilitator who oversees the operation of the lab and debriefs learnings about the target, data collection and conferencing. Training sessions should be held with lab instructors prior to the first lab and again after the first few labs. Initially, student pairs should conference in front of the whole lab group to learn how to conferencing procedures. When students understand the procedures, pre- and postconferences can take place simultaneously as the instructor circulates from pair to pair. Students then, in their journals, record their learnings and feelings about and their plans for school practice of the target. A procedure which can be used in microteaching labs is described in the appendix.

Lessons can be video-taped. It is recommended that this be done at least twice during the term. Video-taping can "save a thousand words" and allow students to compare "before and after" performance.

Classroom Teaching to Practice the Target

After students have studied the theory and rationale for a target, have seen it modeled, and have practiced it in a microteaching laboratory, they are ready to practice the target while teaching "real" pupils. They are now armed to practice the target in the more complex, less "safe," setting of a classroom. Student pairs will be placed with a cooperating (or sponsor) teacher. The major purpose of the classroom placement is for students to have an opportunity to practice specific targets in a realistic setting. Theory with practice integration is enhanced. Students can receive feedback from their placement partners and cooperating teachers.

Procedure. A cooperating teacher should be selected to work with each pair. Pairs should be same as those in microteaching labs. A cooperating teacher orientation session should be held to explain the purposes of the practicum experience and the roles of student teachers, cooperating teachers, and faculty instructors. Teachers should be given: (a) An information sheet about each student, (b) material that explains the procedures being used, and targets to be practiced together with data collection instruments to be used, and (c) a schedule outlining the weekly professional target cycles. The professional development process should continue to be used as in labs. Conferencing can be conducted by student pairs with the input of cooperating teachers, (they listen and make contributions based on their knowledge and experience). Ownership and responsibility for learning continues to rest with each student teacher. Cooperating teachers are not the experts who "tell." They are "helpers" that provide opportunity for students to teach lessons that lend themselves to the practice of the specific targets that are the primary goals of lessons. School lesson content should be relatively simple and not require extensive preparation time.

Reflection: Using a Professional Journal

Reflection and Decision-making. The goal is to prepare self-analyzing, self-actualizing teacher/decision-makers. Students should develop a life-long habit of systematic reflective decision making much beyond recipes and/or intuition. Before and after a target has been attempted, students should reflect about their learnings and future target attempts. How a specific target fits into the total teaching act should also be considered. While targets should initially be isolated and practiced separately, they do not exist in a vacuum. They should become part of students' decision-making repertoires. Just as an artist who paints in oils must acquire the knowledge and techniques of his medium and knowledge of form, line, balance and texture, so must the student teacher thoughtfully learn the skills and strategies used by effective, creative teachers.

The Professional Journal. Written reflection about professional development experiences can be powerful and valuable! Students should, in a personalized way, sit back and think about what has occurred and should occur. Effective journalizing involves the cognitive acts of recalling, analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating and planning. A record of personal professional growth emerges As entries are made. Students can visualize where they have been, where they now are, and where they hope to go. Suggestions for keeping a journal are included in the appendix.

Record of Professional Targets

Student teachers should keep a record of their professional target attempts during lab and classroom lessons. The record provides a profile of progress. Entries should clearly indicate the

targets that need more attention and the particular aspects that require further practice. Their record can be useful when students move to the next level of their preparation or after they begin their teaching careers.

Microteaching and Classroom Teaching Summative Profiles

Lab instructors and cooperating teachers should be as specific and descriptive as possible when they complete profiles of their student teachers.

The Professional Development Process and In Service Teachers

> Teachers are almost universally expected to evaluate, revise, and improve the methods they follow in their teaching. The improvement of teaching involves a behavioral change on the part of teachers. (Wiles & Bondi, 1989, p. 206)

Ownership for continued professional development should rest with the individual teacher. Efforts to force teachers to change are rarely desirable because of the negative feelings that may result. While it may not be possible to use the full-blown professional development process that has been described, key elements of the process can be followed.

Using the Professional Development Process

The Supervisory Cycle. "Some prefer to go it alone, but most of us find solace and intellectual stimulation in a collaborative environment" (Brandt, 1987, p. 3). The teacher may or may not have somebody available to help plan personal professional development and to collect data and provide feedback on target attempts. Even if an administrator or colleague (a "helper") is not available the teacher should still try to use as much of the preconference, observation/data collection and postconference cycle as possible.

If a helper (or helping team) is available, during the *preconference,* the pair (or team) can discuss the theoretical basis for the target, specifically what the teacher will do to try to achieve the target, how data are to be collected and how feedback is to be provided. When the lesson is taught the observer can collect objective, specific and descriptive data about what occurred with reference to the target. During the *postconference* the observer can present the data and act as a nonjudgmental helper as the teacher analyzes and interprets the data and then decides specific future action.

If a helper (or team) are not available, the teacher will need to decide which target will receive attention, become knowledgeable about the theoretical basis or rationale, and decide specifically how to go about the attempt to achieve the target. A method of collecting data should be determined. After the lesson has been taught, the teacher will need to analyze and interpret the data and decide future action.

The Helping Relationship. The effective professional avoids complacency with current instructional procedures, accepts ownership for his/her own professional growth and is willing to seek and to try new approaches. This teacher's frame of reference is a positive one based on intellectual curiosity, willingness to risk, and a commitment to facilitate the growth of learners.

Roles of should be clear. The teacher is the decision-maker and has responsibility for the success or "deferred success" of attempts to improve instruction. The helper act should act as a genuine, empathetic, open and caring facilitator. Behaviors of the effective helper include the use of the interpersonal skills of listening, paraphrasing, and perception checking. The teacher is helped when the other person: seeks information, seeks alternatives or suggests these when requested, helps surface pros and cons of ideas, summarizes, and provides objective, specific and descriptive feedback. Feedback sources and instruments that can be used are described later.

Successful professional growth, normally involves the help of others. However, the teacher may prefer to "go it alone" or the services of a helper or team may not be available. Success is dependent upon a frame of reference characterized by intellectual curiosity and objectivity, commitment to optimum student growth, persistence and hard work. Feedback sources and instruments that can be used are discussed later.

Theory with Practice Cycle

Professional development should not normally be a "hit or miss" procedure. Improvement should be based on what is known about effective instruction, self-knowledge about current capability, a commitment to improve, a feedback system, practice, and informed and objective reflection. Planning for continued professional development should use a cycle of:

Theory **-->** ***Reflection*** **-->** ***Practice*** **-->** ***Reflection*** **-->** **etc.**

Steps that can be used in the theory-with-practice cycle are:

- discover personal professional capability,
- reflect,
- initiate a personal professional development plan regarding the targets to receive attention,
- determine the theoretical basis and rationale for a target area and specific target,
- reflect,
- determine how the target will be attempted and data collected,
- attempt the target,
- reflect, and
- decide future action with respect to the target (try again or move to another target).

Receiving and Using Feedback

Sources of Professional Development Ideas and Feedback

Instructional improvement ideas and feedback can come from a variety of sources:

SOURCES OF FEEDBACK

A. Ideas and Feedback From Others
1. *Colleague*. Teachers may pair for to obtain instructional improvement ideas, feedback and support. Pairs can observe and conference with each other, or they can work alongside each other (and preplan and debrief together).
2. *Teams of colleagues*. This is similar to #1 but three or more colleagues work together (Joyce & Showers, 1982).
3. *Administrator*. An administrator can initiate supervision efforts with a specific teacher, or an administrator can be invited by a teacher to provide assistance in.

4. *Student teacher*. A cooperating (sponsor) teacher may get instructional improvement ideas through discussions with, and/or observations of, a student teacher. Student teachers can also conference with, and collect data for, their cooperating teachers.
5. *University (or other) classes*. A teacher could enroll in a class that follows a theory/practice/feedback/reflection format. An example of a commercial program that uses this format is "Project Teach."
6. *Pupils*. Instructional improvement ideas can also be obtained from pupils through questionnaires, checklist or discussions. Students can also be asked to collect relatively simple data.

B. Ideas and Feedback from Oneself.

1. *Inservice*. Workshops or conferences can be sources of instructional improvement ideas.
2. *Readings*. Sources include professional books, monographs, journals, and newsletters.
3. *Electronic Recordings*. A VTR or audio tape can be used to record a lesson or portion of lesson to be analyzed by the teacher.
4. *Recollection*. The teacher may simply "play back" and analyze in his or her mind what occurred during a series of lessons, a lesson or portion of a lesson.
5. *Serendipity*. Ideas for professional improvement may serendipitously occur. The teacher, for example, may be having a staff room discussion with a colleague when an idea for personal improvement may suddenly emerge. This can be jotted down and a professional improvement plan formulated. Other sources of serendipitous ideas may be movies, plays, speeches, radio broadcasts or athletic events.

Achieving Success. While it certainly is possible for well-motivated teachers who are not helped by a colleague or team to improve their professional capabilities, research (Joyce and Showers,1982) indicates that:

> The development of skill by itself does not ensure transfer; relatively few teachers, having obtained skill in a new approach, will then transfer that skill into their active repertoire . . . unless they receive additional information. (p. 5)

Their solution to the problem is "coaching" which includes the dimensions of:

- support and interchange with another person or other persons;
- provision of feedback regarding target attempts;
- decision-making about using a skill and what can be achieved by its use;
- determining how students might (and then do) respond; and,
- "personal facilitation" which requires practice and support and feedback during and after the practice (pp. 6-7).

Joyce and Showers observe that "most coaching should be performed by teams of teachers working together to study new approaches to teaching and to polish their existing teaching skills" (p. 7).

Methods of Obtaining Feedback

Keep it Simple But Not Simplistic. Feedback on teaching behavior is needed if improvement is to take place. Data can be gathered about any aspect of instruction that the teacher wishes. The focus can be on conceptual or affective aspects or on teacher behavior or student

behavior. The data collected can help the teacher make decisions about his or her future behavior. The need for descriptive, specific and nonjudgmental feedback has been discussed earlier, as has the notion that ownership of the data and the effort to improve reside within the pre- or inservice teacher.

Reasonably systematic and reliable feedback can be obtained:

(1) from students,

(2) from fellow teachers, or

(3) by developing a system for labeling and interpreting their own behavior Good & Brophy,1987, p. 48).

Many formal classroom observation procedures are available. These are usually sophisticated and require extensive training and practice for proficiency. When well used, they are consistent and reliable. Realistically however, most teachers and administrators do not have sufficient expertise. The data gathering system should be within the capability of the data collector and understandable to the teacher. This means that data collection techniques should normally not be complicated or require a great deal of skill to use and interpret. A sampling of relatively simple data gathering techniques will be briefly described below.

Techniques for Data Gathering. Three categories of data gathering systems are described below:

TECHNIQUES FOR GATHERING DATA

1. Electronic
Use of video tape recorder or audio tape recorders. The whole lesson or selected portions can be recorded and later analyzed by the teacher. This preserves a totally accurate record of behavior. Tapes can be analyzed with the help of another person or by the teacher alone. Some of the systems discussed below can be used to analyze tapes.

2. Simple Informal
(a) *Verbatim.* Writing out as completely as possible some or all of the teacher and student talk in the classroom. This is easier than it might seem, particularly if the observer has a good memory, uses a "shorthand" system or the pauses and repetitions of the teacher.
(b) *Partial Verbatim.* This may the most useful of the informal systems since the specific target for improvement may be all that needs attention in a given lesson. The data collector can attend to:

i. writing out selected portions of what the teacher says, for example, teacher statements or directions, teacher questions, and teacher responses;
ii. writing out selected portions of what students say, for example responses to questions, volunteered questions or comments, free talk, and participation in prompts, probes, redirects; or,
iii. some combination of "i" and "ii."

(c) *Task Analysis.* Recording, using a seating chart and numeric, letter, or other coding, an indication of what each student is doing at regular time intervals (e.g., three minutes) or specifically, for instance the kind of off-task behavior. Seating charts are easy to use and can be used for a variety of other situations, for example, question distribution.
(d) *Tallying.* Counts of occurrences of behavior can be done. Examples are: the number of different levels or kinds of questions used by the teacher; the number and kind of teacher and

student statements; the number of seconds that elapse before a specific student is asked to respond after a question is phrased; and, the number of praise, blaming or criticism statement made by the teacher.

(e) *Sequence Report.* Using a checklist, code, or brief descriptive statements, or recording the sequences of teacher behaviors or statements. Examples include: steps used in giving directions, steps used in handling minor disruptions, steps used in asking questions, or steps used in giving a demonstration.

(f) *Teacher Movement Chart.* Using a seating chart with symbols to indicate how the teacher moves about the room and relates to students by physically moving to work stations.

C. Formal Systems

A variety of formal systems are available. These include:

(a) *Interaction Analysis.* Categorizing all the talk that is occurring within the classroom by writing a numeral every three seconds and tabulating the results. The total of teacher talk time and student talk time is calculated and the direct and indirect influence of the teacher may be determined.

(b) *Coping Behavior.* Categorizing specific behaviors of students by writing numerals every three minutes. Categories can range from "Aggressive" to "Physical Withdrawal."

(c) *Teacher Nonverbal Behavior.* Observing and recording the nonverbal behaviors within a predetermined set of categories that generally occur in a given lesson.

A Way of Getting Started

Personal Professional Development

Introduction. When a teacher begins the process of systematic professional development, the starting point should be present capability. Reports or evaluations completed by administrators, fellow teachers, or students can be very useful for a teacher to gain knowledge of instructional effectiveness. Ultimately however, what the teacher believes about him- or herself is critical.

The teacher can construct a personal "profile" of instructional effectiveness. This can be done on the basis of what the teacher knows or seeks out about effective instruction and on the basis of feedback from others. Areas in need of attention should be determined and priorized and an action plan devised. The professional development process presented in this paper can be used as can the "Personal Professional Targets" profile of the University of Regina or a similar instrument.

The Profile. Over the years, many lists of competencies have been devised and used. A plethora of checklists and rating forms or instrument also exist and have been used. These lists or devices have much in common. The University of Regina "Personal Professional Targets" profile contains typical items. It consists of six categories:

A. Personal Qualities

1. Appropriate appearance and dress
2. Positive, poise and exercise self-control and control under pressure
3. Emotional maturity (punctual in commitments, receptive to new ideas, conflict resolution skills, constructive approach)
4. Effective voice and speech
5. Exercise initiative
6. Respectful and considerate of others
7. Effective interpersonal skills (paraphrasing, perception checking, etc.

B. Professional Qualities

1. Knowledge of subject matter
2. Oral communication
3. Written communication
4. Nonverbal communication
5. Interest in teaching
6. Professional self-confidence
7. Enthusiasm
8. Creativity
9. Self-evaluation
10. Dependability
11. Constructive use of feedback
12. Relationships with colleagues
13. Use of praise, encouragement
14. Observing Code of Ethics
15. Professional activity participation
16. Participation in extracurricular
17. Sensitivity to community needs
18. Interaction with parents

C. Classroom Management

1. Earning student respect; setting positive climate
2. Establishing/maintaining classroom routines and procedures
3. Keeping students on task
4. Communicating expectations (direction-giving; assignments)
5. Problem-solving with students
6. Providing for social differences (needs, perspectives, individual and cultural differences)
7. Using discipline techniques (communicating, monitoring, being consistent with, rewards and punishments)
8. Establishing and maintaining general classroom control (enforcement of classroom and school rules; using management skills--withitness, overlapping, movement management, group focus); handling minor disruptions)

D. Organization and Planning

1. Lesson planning (determining prerequisite learnings; setting objectives; determining set, development and closure; evaluation; congruence of lesson elements)
2. Unit planning
3. Record keeping
4. Correcting and returning assignments

E. Teaching Competencies

1. Establish lesson set
2. Providing lesson closure
3. Explaining
5. Demonstrating
6. Questioning
7. AV materials
8. Media
9. Lesson summaries
10. Review and practice
11. Motivating
12. Providing for mastery learning
13. Diagnosing academic problems
14. Providing for academic differences
15. Teaching thinking skills/processes
16. Balance of student/teacher participation
17. Varying teaching approach
18. Development of social attitudes
19. Teaching attitudes/values
20. Varying the stimulus
21. Integrating instructional domains
22. Using basic teaching skills
23. Teaching concepts
24. Teaching skills
25. Using librarian as partner
26. Teaching for transfer
27. Modifying curriculum to meet class needs

F. Professional Development

1. Setting appropriate professional targets
2. Selecting or designing appropriate data collection techniques (collecting data on self as appropriate)
3. Analyzing and interpreting collected data
4. Using learnings to improve teaching performance
5. Pre- and postconferencing

G. Communication, Interpersonal and Group Skills
1. Communicating verbally
2. Communicating nonverbally
3. "Helping" characteristics and interpersonal skills
4. Group skills
5. Setting a positive classroom climate

Coming up with a Plan. The teacher needs to know where to begin and the sequence of competencies that will be attended to, the standard of behavior (or change) to be achieved, who will observe and collect data, and how data will be collected and interpreted.

Criteria for selecting the starting point:

a. personal anxiety
b. more to less important (e.g., classroom management may well be the focus before attempting an unguided inquiry teaching method)
c. simple to complex (to allow better concentration on harder targets)
d. possibility of rapid success (to build positive feelings and to free the teacher to work on more difficult targets)
e. indications from others: administrators, peers, student teachers, pupils
f. readings viewing others: examples (or nonexamples) of competencies

Conclusion

We can become thoughtful, active and autonomous professionals who engage in personal professional development from preservice to retirement service. Using a systematic approach to personal professional development can be personally satisfying and professionally rewarding. The big winners will be pupils and, through these, broader society.

References

Alexander, L. (1986). Time for results: An overview. Phi Delta Kappan. 68, (4), 202-204.

Berliner, D. (1984). The half-full glass: A review of research on teaching. In P. L. Hosford (Ed.). Using what we know about teaching. Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Blackburn, J., Burnham, R., Scannel, D., Gant, J., & Howsam, R. (1981). Final report: Task force on quality standards for extended programs. Association of Colleges and Schools of Education in State Universities and Land Grant Colleges, October.

Brandt, R. (1987). Learning with and from one another. Educational Leadership. 44, (5), 3.

Brophy, J., & Good, T. (1986). Teacher behavior and student achievement. In M. Wittrock (Ed.), Handbook of research on teaching (3d. ed., pp. 328-375). New York: Macmillan.

Carnegie Foundation. (1986). teaching in the 21st century: A nation prepared. Washington, D.C.: The Forum.

Clifton, R. & Long, J. (1984). Toward a conceptualization of teacher education. In P. Grimmett (Ed.), Research in teacher education: Current problems and future prospects in Canada. Vancouver: University of British Columbia.

Coonan, H. (1987). Teacher education: Research and practice, moving beyond practice. Keynote Lecture, 7th Annual International Seminar in Teacher Education, Maastrich, the Netherlands, April.

Gage, N. (1984). What do we know about teaching effectiveness. Phi Delta Kappan. 66, (2), 87-93.

Good, T., & Brophy, J. (1987). Looking in classrooms, Fourth Ed. New York: Harper and Row.

Goodlad, J. (1984). A place called school. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Hensen, K. (1988). Methods and strategies for teaching in secondary and middle schools. New York: Longman.

Joyce, B., & Showers, B. (1982). The coaching of teaching. Educational Leadership. 40, (1), 4-10.

Kindsvatter, R., Wilen, W., & Ishler, M. (1988). Dynamics of effective teaching. New York: Longman.

Lasley, T. (1985). In G. Hall, Beyond the looking glass: Policies, practices and research in teacher education. Journal of Teacher Education. 36, (1), 2-6.

Mitchell, D., & Peters, M. (1988). A stronger profession through appropriate teacher incentives. Educational Leadership. 46, (3), 74-78.

National Commission on Excellence. (1983). A nation at risk. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

O'Neill, G. (1988). Teaching effectiveness: A review of the research. Canadian Journal of Teacher Education. 13, (1), 162-185.

Ornstein, A. (1985). Research on teaching: Issues and trends. Journal of Teacher Education. 36, (6), 27-31.

O'Sullivan, M. (1988). Using research on teaching. In P. Holborn, M. Wideen, I. Andrews, (Eds.), Becoming a teacher. Toronto: Kagen and Woo.

Rosenshine, B., & Stevens, R. (1986). Teaching functions. In M. Wittrock (Ed.), Handbook of research on teaching (3d. ed., pp. 376-391). New York: Macmillan.

Silberman, C. (1984). In A. Woolfolk, Educational psychology, 3d Ed. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.

Smith, B. O. (1987). Research bases for teacher education. Phi Delta Kappan. 96, (10), 685-690.

Task Force for Economic Growth. (1983). Action for excellence. Denver: Education Commission of the States.

Thompson, L. (1983). Effective schools: A review of the literature. Prepared for the S.S.T.A. Education and Research Committee at the request of Saskatchewan Education and the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association, April.

Weber, W., Roff, L., Crawford, J., & Robinson, C. (1983). Classroom management: Reviews of the teacher education and research literature. Princeton: Educational Testing Service.

Wiles, J., & Bondi, J. (1989). Curriculum development: A guide to practice, 3d Ed. Columbus: Merrill.

Appendix

SUGGESTED STEPS FOR PRACTICING THE TARGET IN THE MICROTEACHING LAB

1. *Student teachers are paired.* Pairs preconference, observe and collect data, and postconference on the lessons each teaches.

2. *Every student prepares a lesson plan for each lab.* The plan should outline what the student is trying to do to achieve lesson objectives and what will be done to to achieve the professional target. Students hand their lesson plans in to the lab instructor for written suggestions. These are returned during the next lab.

3. *Each student holds a preconference with the other of the pair about the lesson which is to be presented.* One student acts as a "helper" to the "teacher" whose plans for the up-coming lesson are being discussed. The helper finds out what the other is intending to do regarding: (a) the lesson objectives, content, materials and aids, set, development, closure and evaluation, and (b) how the other intends to go about achieving the professional target, and how data is to be recorded (Figure 7 provides a conference checklist). Behaviors of the helper include: listening, seeking information, clarifying, and seeking alternatives and consequences of these. The helper does not tell the other what to do. S/he helps the other examine the plan, surface concerns, facilitates problem solving, and provides empathetic and nonjudgmental support. The student teacher's plans may be somewhat revised as a result of the conference; and, the teacher should now have a better understanding of, and comfort with, what s/he is about to do in the forthcoming lesson.

4. *The lesson is taught and data is collected.* Student teachers, in turn, teach their lessons to their lab group. The partner of each student observes from an appropriate vantage point and collects data as agreed. Prior to teaching the lesson, the teacher may ask group members to role play a certain age group and tells them what prerequisite knowledge or skill(s) they will be presumed to possess.

5. *Each student holds a postconference with the other of the pair about the lesson which has been presented.* Opportunity should have been available for the "helper" to have considered the significance of the data collected, and how it can be presented in a way that helps the "teacher" analyze the data and plan for the future. The helper is not a judge, not one who "tells." His role is that of facilitator. The behaviors used by the helper are as outlined in "3" above. The helper presents the data to the teacher. Data are analyzed and their significance determined. A decision is made by the student teacher about the degree of success of the practice of the target. If the target requires further practice, a decision must be made about the specific aspect(s) requiring attention, and when and how further practice will be conducted. If for example, the target was "direction-giving," the teacher may decide that although, in general, the target went well, further practice is needed which includes a specific plan for "checking up" on pupils more effectively; and, that in the next school lesson, the target should emphasize "checking up" to see if directions were understood. A postconference checklist is provided in Figure 7.

6. *Debriefing on target trials and the nature of data collection and conferencing takes place.* Under the guidance of the lab instructor, about ten minutes is taken to examine learnings about the

target and to discuss learnings about data collection and conferencing. Students, then, are encouraged to think further about how they will try the target when they teach their next school lesson. Lesson plans and the feedback received are handed in to the lab instructor who will provide comments and suggestions.

7. *Students reflect about their professional target attempts.* Before students attempt their professional targets in a classroom, they should further consider what they have learned and exactly what they will try to do before they attempt the target again. It is very useful for students to keep a professional journal, or in which they can house their lesson plans and feedback, and record their reflections about their experiences and plans for the next practice. More microteaching practice may be necessary and helpful if time is available.

Pre- and Postconference Checklists

Preconference Checklist

___ Topic
___ Identification of Content
___ Prerequisite Learnings
___ Set
___ Development
___ Closure
___ Materials and Aids
___ Evaluation
___ Professional Target
___ Actions Proposed to Achieve Target
___ Data Collection Method

Postconference Checklist

___ Debriefing on the lesson regarding plans for achievement of objectives by pupils
___ Review of target and method of data collection as agreed
___ Presentation of the data collected
___ Analysis of data by the teacher as assisted by the helper
___ Decision by the teacher as to the significance of the data
___ Decision by the teacher as to specific action for the future

---

SUGGESTED STEPS FOR PRACTICING THE TARGET IN A CLASSROOM

1. *Each pair of students is placed with a classroom teacher.* Prior to their first visit, students make telephone contact with their cooperating teachers to introduce themselves and to arrange to meet their teachers. The first visit should be for the purpose of orientation to the school and the classroom, and for students and teachers to get to know each other and discuss their roles. A teacher training institution contact person is named, and cooperating teachers are given an orientation to the program.

2. *Students are assigned a lesson topic by their cooperating teachers.* During the first visit, the topic for the following visit may be agreed upon or students may be asked to phone at a predetermined time to have a topic assigned that is congruent with the schedule of the classroom and suitable for practice of the target.

3. *Preconferencing takes place before each lesson is taught.* Student pairs preconference with the assistance of their cooperating teachers. Each "teacher's" partner and cooperating teacher acts as "helper" in the manner described above for microteaching lessons.

4. *Lessons are taught and data are collected.* Partners and the cooperating teachers of the student teachers observe and collect data. Stress is on practice of the professional target, although secondary targets can be solicited by the student teacher and agreed upon by the "teacher" and "helper(s)."

5. *Student teachers hold postconferences about their lessons with their partners and cooperating teachers.* Opportunity should have been available for the helpers (partners and cooperating teachers) to consider the significance of the data which was collected and how data can be presented so the student teacher can analyze the data and formulate plans for future tries of the target. The data are presented to the student teachers. Student teachers analyze the data and determine their significance. A decision is then made regarding the degree of success of the lesson and the professional target attempt. If the target requires further practice, a decision is made about the specific aspect(s) that require attention and when, and how, further practice is to take place.

6. *Reflection about learnings through the classroom practice of the target takes place.* Students should carefully think about what they have experienced and what they should do in the future to develop further proficiency in the use of the skill which was the professional target. Students should include lesson plans for the lessons they taught, feedback they received, and reflections about these in their professional journals.

KEEPING THE JOURNAL

1. *Dividers.* It is helpful to have a title page and to have dividers to separate journal sections. Make entries under the headings: class experiences, microteaching lab experiences, classroom experiences, special investigations, stocktaking, and career choice. Place a Journal Checklist (Appendix A) at the front.

2. *Class experiences.* The main focus for the on-campus classes section should be the weekly professional target(s). Use the headings:

   (a) Description: What was presented, discussed and modeled? What activities took place?;
   (b) Impact: What was the impact for you as a developing professional? What did you learn? How do *you feel about it?; and,*
   (c) Intent: What do you intend to do as a result of what you have learned when you practice the target in the lab? Specifically what? How? When?

3. *Microteaching lab experiences.* For the microteaching labs section, reflect about how your lesson went in terms of the target, and about what you learned about the target as a result of the rest of your lab experiences. Under the heading Description, very briefly describe what happened in the lab; under the heading Impact, note what you learned about, and how you feel about, your target as a result of your lesson and the other lessons; and, under the heading Intent, *tell, very specifically, what you will do as a result of your learnings and feelings when you practice the target in your school.* Please attach the lesson plan of the lesson you taught and the feedback that you received, (also record any verbal feedback you received).

4. *Classroom experiences.* For the classroom experiences section, under the heading Description, please describe:
   (a) how you practiced your target,
   (b) how your partner practiced the target, and
   (c) how your cooperating teacher uses the target. Under the heading Impact, describe what you learned about, and how you feel about, your practice of the target and your partner's practice of the target; and, under the heading Intent, t*ell, very specifically, what you will do when you next will have an opportunity to practice the target.* Please attach your lesson plan and all of feedback that you received.

5. *Special Investigations and Other Thoughts*. In your special investigations section, record things you saw or heard in class, the lab or the building that made an impression, or caused you to wonder? Did you read something or interview the principal, a teacher, a pupil or somebody else? Is there anything else you want to comment on?

6. *Stocktaking*. In the stocktaking section, at mid term, do an inventory of your professional growth. Indicate what you knew and could do as a teacher at the start of the term, what you now know and can do, and what you still need to know and be able to do. Take stock again at the term end, picking up from were you left off at mid term.

7. *Career Choice*. At the end of the term, in your career choice section, comment on your choice of becoming a teacher. Do you still want to be a teacher? Why? Grade or age level? Future plans? What other alternatives do you have? What is influencing your choice?

NOTE: You should have ABOUT ONE PAGE for each on-campus Class; ONE-and-a-HALF pages for each Lab (attach lesson plan and feedback); and TWO-and-a-HALF pages for each Classroom experience (attach lesson plans and feedback). Special Investigations will be about THREE pages; Stocktaking and Career Choice sections about ONE page each.